

The Benefice of Groby & Ratby



Dear Friends,

It seems people really like to celebrate! Many "Christmas" parties, concerts and bazaars will start soon (and may have already started). It's tempting to feel worn out even before Advent begins. When Christmas does arrive, we will all be ready for sleep!

Yet, among all these things, our experience of Christmas will be as varied as we all are, with different reasons to celebrate and different ways of celebrating.

Many will be expecting a big gathering and lots of cheer (of the 80^o variety, maybe) and some enjoying a quiet time! On the other hand, there may be others who have reasons for not welcoming what our culture has decided is the biggest party of the year commercially and a time when everyone is supposed to be happy.

December 2025



We all, I suspect, know of people who are not looking forward to it. Some will have recently been bereaved and lost a loved one. Then again, I was speaking to a chap the other day who has a drink problem and knows that Christmas, where the family always over-indulges, will bring his brave attempts to become dry to nought. Another said he only remembers childhood family rows and expects that this Christmas will be no different. Then I met a woman who remembered Christmases past where, as a girl, there would be a huge gathering and much merriment. Yet, now, in later years she is facing the prospect of Christmas alone, when she will see no-one.

It's then I wonder whether the expectations that our culture places on this time of year, will obfuscate what the Christian

celebration should really be all about.

Now, tradition is a wonderful gift. I would not make light of it. Christmas customs of celebration can be valuable and can create good memories that last forever. However, tradition and custom can also make us feel cut off and it may be there we can feel pain, not anticipation. It all depends on what our “good news” is.

For it's not the coming of our Lord which causes pain, for, should we open our eyes to it, the message of Christmas is good news of great joy for all who will open their ears to hear. If the celebration this year is causing anxiety, as the past squeezes us too forcefully into an unwanted mold, perhaps it's time to consider again the real “reason for the season.”

Jesus came to bring the assurance that He is Emmanuel, “God with us.” God knows our feelings, not because he has a good imagination (although I'm sure he has), but because he has been here and has ‘shared our human condition.’ He knew grief and loneliness, pain and victimisation. The Incarnation reminds us that when we cry, God cries, too.

We can sense God's grief at the way the world is. His grief at the way His Son was treated when he came on earth to proclaim God's Kingdom. Yet, through pure love the Son of God, the King who was born in humble circumstances laid down his life for us. If we open our hearts we can sense his love for us, especially when we are “poor in spirit”. In fact, when we are at our lowest then maybe our eyes can be opened to the reality of his wonderful gift of life.

The true peace of Christmas is there to be sought in the here and now and not re-manufactured from the past, not to be found in the tinselled trappings of the commercial Christmas. Recognizing grace in the present moment is the key to a real celebration that God really is with us. Then this Christmas will not be the same as other years. The true celebration of Christmas should help us walk into the future, bearing hope in a world seemingly gone mad.

So, we have an opportunity to celebrate Christmas differently this year, discovering again what many of us already know but need to be reminded about. That it's not about stuff. It's not about the past. It's not about a vague “Christmassy feeling” but about the “presence,” that sense that the Kingdom of God is close and that we can reach out and grasp it.

At Christmas our Churches in Groby and Ratby will gather to stand as witness to the miracle of the Incarnation, proclaiming again that God is with us. All are invited to join in. Whatever your situation, whoever you

are, our doors will be open to all who seek to investigate this truth for themselves.

So, look out for our Christmas cards, as always, showing when and where our services will take place. In particular, there will be in Groby and Ratby parish churches' Open Church afternoons*, for people who have lost loved ones, or have other things on their hearts, to spend a time of quiet and remembrance, to light a candle and maybe write a prayer.

This year we have the opportunity to make Christmas real again, by understanding the “reason for the season”, that Christ came down at Christmas bringing true hope to a world in pain, creating a light which will never Go out....

Have a blessed Christmas.

Keith Wignall
Associate Minister,
Benefice of Groby and Ratby.

*Ratby Open Church at Christmas – 13th December, 2-4pm
Groby Open Church at Christmas – 20th December, 2-4pm

Our lovely ex-Curate *Rev'd Riffat* will be licensed as Vicar in the Humberstone and Thurnby Lodge Benefice at St Mary's church Humberstone, 7pm on Wednesday 3rd December. All are welcome to attend, and I know she would appreciate the support.

SUNDAY TELEPHONE SERVICES - DECEMBER

DATE	GROBY/RATBY
7th	11.15am Telephone Church (RD)
14th	11.15am Telephone Church (RS)
21st	11.15am Telephone Church (JH)
28th	11.15am Telephone Church (JH)

ON-LINE SERVICES - DECEMBER

REGULAR WEEKDAY ONLINE SERVICES

At 9pm Tuesday - night prayer

NATIONAL CHURCH SERVICES ON-LINE

There are usually national church services being streamed on Sundays that can be accessed via:

<https://www.facebook.com/thechurchofengland>

and if that is not possible there is Sunday worship on Radio 4.

MIDWEEK COMMUNION SERVICES December 2025

GROBY	Wed 9.30am	3rd	10th	17th	24th
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GROBY/RATBY *SUNDAY SERVICES - DECEMBER*

DATE	GROBY	RATBY
7th 2nd Sunday of Advent	8.00am Holy Communion (EB)	
	9.30am All Age Service (Team)	10.00am Holy Communion (EB)
	6.00pm Holy Communion (EB)	
14th 3rd Sunday of Advent		8.00am Holy Communion (EB)
	9.30am Holy Communion (EB)	10.00am Morning Worship (RD)
	6.00pm Evensong (RS)	4.00pm Carol Service (EB)
21st 4th Sunday of Advent	8.00am Holy Communion (EB)	
	9.30am Nativity (Team)	10.00am Holy Communion (EB)
		3.00pm Christingle (EB/AC)
	6.00pm Carol Service (EB)	
28th 1st Sunday of Christmas		
	10.00am Benefice Morning Worship (Team)	

GROBY/RATBY *CHRISTMAS SERVICES*

DATE	GROBY	RATBY
24th Christmas Eve	9.30am Holy Communion (EB)	
	4.00pm Christingle (Team/LB/RS)	3.00pm Crib Service (EB/AC)
	11.00pm Midnight Communion (EB)	11.30pm Midnight Communion (EB/ RD)
25th Christmas Day		
	10.00am Family Christmas (Team)	10.00am Family Communion (EB)

December Diary

1st	Mon	9.00am 7.30pm	Morning Prayer at Ratby Julian Meeting: <i>Sharing Silence</i> at Groby Library
2nd	Tues	9.15 - 10.30am 3.15 - 4.30pm 9.00pm	Tots & Toddlers at Ratby Church Kids Konnect at Ratby Church Online Night Prayer
3rd	Wed	9.30am 7.00pm	Holy Communion at Groby Rev'd Riffat's licensing at St Mary's Humberstone
4th	Thurs	10.30 - 12.00pm	CTG Fair Cuppa at Groby Village Hall
5th	Fri	9.30 - 11.00am 7.30 - 9.00pm	CTG CatCh at Groby URC Rock Solid at URC Groby
6th	Sat	10.00 - 12.00pm 10.00 - 6.00pm	Groby Tasters hosted at Groby URC Christmas Tree Festival at Groby Church
7th	Sun	8.00am 9.30am 10.00am 11.15am 12.00 - 5.00pm 12.30pm 6.00pm	Holy Communion at Groby All Age Worship at Groby Holy Communion at Ratby Telephone Church Christmas Tree Festival at Groby Church Lunch Club at Ratby Holy Communion at Groby
8th	Mon	9.00am 3.00 - 5.00pm	Morning Prayer at Ratby Christmas Tree Festival at Groby Church
9th	Tues	9.15 - 10.30am 3.00 - 5.00pm 3.15 - 4.30pm 9.00pm	Tots & Toddlers at Ratby Church Christmas Tree Festival at Groby Church Kids Konnect at Ratby Church Online Night Prayer
10th	Wed	9.30am 2.30pm	Holy Communion at Groby Women's Guild meeting
11th	Thurs	10.30 - 12.00pm	CTG Fair Cuppa at Groby Village Hall
12th	Fri	9.30 - 11.00am 7.30 - 9.00pm	CTG CatCh at Groby URC Rock Solid at URC Groby
13th	Sat	10.00 - 12.00pm 2.00 - 4.00pm	Groby Tasters hosted at Groby URC Open Church at Ratby
14th	Sun	8.00am 9.30am 10.00am 10.30am 4.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm	Holy Communion at Ratby Holy Communion at Groby Morning Worship at Ratby Crossfire at the Village Hall Carol Service at Ratby Evensong at Groby Taizé Service at Markfield Methodist Church
15th	Mon	9.00am	Morning Prayer at Ratby

16th	Tues	9.15 - 10.30am 3.15 - 4.30pm 7.00pm 9.00pm	Tots & Toddlers at Ratby Church Kids Konnect at Ratby Church Carols Round the Tree at Stamford Arms Online Night Prayer
17th	Wed	9.30am	Holy Communion at Groby
18th	Thurs	10.30 - 12.00pm	CTG Fair Cuppa with carols at Groby Village Hall
19th	Fri	9.30 - 11.00am 2.00pm 7.30 - 9.00pm	CTG CatCh at Groby URC Over 60s Cinema at Ratby Church Rock Solid at URC Groby
20th	Sat	10.00 - 12.00pm 2.00 - 4.00pm	Groby Tasters hosted at Groby URC Open Church at Groby
21st	Sun	8.00am 9.30am 10.00am 11.15am 3.00pm 6.00pm	Holy Communion at Groby Nativity at Groby Holy Communion at Ratby Telephone Church Christingle at Ratby Carol Service at Groby
22nd	Mon	9.00am	Morning Prayer at Ratby
23rd	Tues	9.00pm	Online Night Prayer
24th	Wed	9.30am 3.00pm 4.00pm 11.00pm 11.30pm	<i>Christmas Eve</i> Holy Communion at Groby Crib Service at Ratby Christingle at Groby Midnight Communion at Groby Midnight Communion at Ratby
25th	Thurs	10.00am 10.00am	<i>Christmas Day</i> Family Christmas at Groby Family Communion at Ratby
26th	Fri		
27th	Sat	10.00 - 12.00pm	Groby Tasters hosted at Groby URC
28th	Sun	10.00am 11.15am	Benefice Morning Worship at Groby Telephone Church
29th	Mon	9.00am	Morning Prayer at Ratby
30th	Tues	9.00pm	Online Night Prayer
31st	Wed	9.30am	Holy Communion at Groby

Rector's Ramblings

A few years ago, I remember hearing of complaints from some training incumbents (TIs) that they had curates refusing to do certain 'menial' tasks. On being asked to help with simple things they were apparently retorting to their hapless TIs that they hadn't done all this training at theological college 'just to move chairs'. This made me laugh as when I was at Queen's my liturgy tutor, Mark Earey, did indeed train me (and us all!) to do just that. As an engineer prior to ordination he was very particular about the alignment of the chairs in the Chapel, so if we ever moved the chairs for a new arrangement when we were leading worship, they were to be returned to EXACTLY their original position with proper engineering precision. And I remember looking carefully along the line of chairs to ensure they were perfectly aligned, as we all knew Mark would comment if one was so much as a millimetre out of place!

But more than teaching me how to put chairs in place, I learned humility and to do the tasks that might quietly need to be done whether others notice or not. I have been thinking about all the work that goes on 'behind the scenes', as those that have looked at the recent CTG/EXTEND newsletter will have noticed. And our churches are full of those who work behind the scenes in a myriad of ways too numerous to list. But the work of the PCC keeping bills paid, the church building intact and all the other practical and statutory tasks is not to be forgotten. Services and sermons take time to prepare – and that's not just me, but those who also help lead and preach and those who help organise sidespeople, readers, intercessors, refreshments folk and so on. And don't forget the work of the flower arrangers, bell ringers, purificator cleaners/ironers, children's volunteers, Tasters, Fair Cuppa, coffee morning and lunch and cinema club organisers and helpers – and all those who move chairs around and help put up screens to enable so many of these things to happen. Musicians practice, organisers of events spend hours in preparation and many folk make or bake things for the host of things we do. And each of us only sees the outcome of most of this in the things we do in church. But everything is underpinned by the quiet, often unseen and dedicated work, of so many in church. And these pieces of work, as we look towards Christmas, are some of the best gifts you all give – for you

give of yourselves, just as Jesus did in becoming one of us. And I thank Mark Earey for teaching me of the humility I need to reflect the love and humility of Jesus. I move a lot of chairs and, strangely, I do it with joy!

God bless you all.
Rev'd Ed

Services and Events in December

There is lots going on throughout December for all ages from worship every week, including Christingle services and Carol Services and much else besides, alongside fun events such as the Snowman Festival and the Christmas Bazaar in Ratby Church Rooms and Church, concerts, Carols in pubs and much more – do look in the magazine for the full range of things coming up as we look through Advent towards the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

If you would like to join our choir for the 9 Lessons and Carols in Groby (to be held at 6pm on Sunday 21st December), there will be rehearsals in Groby Church for that on Thursday 4th, Friday 12th and Friday 19th December, all at 7.30pm – all welcome.

Never forget we also worship when we meet as Tots and Toddlers on Tuesdays at 9am in Ratby, Kids Konnect in Ratby at 3.15pm and CaTCh on Fridays at 9.30am at the URC – and you are always welcome to come and see what is going on and you might even want to volunteer to help as we build these into new ways of being church.

Online worship continues with our Compline services at 9pm on Tuesdays via Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/StPandStJ>) and we continue our regular 11.15am Telephone Church every Sunday (call 0333 0164 757; then when prompted type in our room number 10336316#; then when prompted our pin 1920#).

For those who struggle to get out, home communion is always available and any of our ministry team would be delighted to come and bring that to you – just contact Rev'd Ed or any of the ministry team (Keith, Joan or Ruth) and we'll arrange that for you.

God bless you all. Prayers, as ever,
Rev'd Ed

The date was the 4th October and we had a weekend booked at Blackwell Adventure Camp. It was planned by the Midlands URC synod and was generously subsidised by them. As myself and 6 youngsters from our Rock Solid group set off for camp this year I



was somewhat concerned with the storm warnings and had packed multiple layers and waterproofs, but these were hardly needed as the

manor was cosy and warm and the rain skirted us.

Richard had planned a mixture of events including wide games, archery, zip lining, laser



tag and caving. This was a good choice for the weather as they could all go ahead despite the high winds, though it did make it tricky to hit the target in archery – that’s my excuse and I am sticking to it.

Zip lining was once again popular, though the walk back up the hill all 250m of it not so. It was ok for the first 3 or 4 goes but we were definitely flagging toward the end! Or maybe it was just me. Laser tag was initially held in amongst the trees but as the wind worsened was moved to an urban setting, round many huts and camping pods. This showed the care the staff took as a

tree did come down during the morning. These exhausting activities were interspersed with discussions and activities looking at community and how we can welcome everyone to “Church”. One of my highlights was hearing our youngsters planning the perfect village, including social housing, so everyone had a place to live, cycle paths and wind turbines were included as were solar panels on all the main village buildings, the community centre, the church and the library! Another session was trying to devise an intergenerational service. The youngsters were surprisingly

staid, but the result was a desire to help with the planning of services expressed by some of our youngsters.

The catering was outstanding with ample meals which filled ever growing teenagers. Who remembers cornflake tart from school days? There were seconds and even thirds available for most meals including supper. And of course there were vegan and gluten free meals available. Even the marsh-

mallows were vegan round our campfire and yes this year it lit!

The day closed each night with parables from The Book of Belonging and wonderful retellings of the Good Samaritan and the Great Feast, where Jesus emphasised all were welcome.



Activities for children and families in our Benefice in December



Tues 2nd	9.15am	Tots & Toddlers	Ratby Church	under 5s
Tues 2nd	3.15pm	Kids Konnect	Ratby Church	Primary
Fri 5th	9.30am	Catch	URC Groby	under 5s
Fri 5th	7.30pm	Rock Solid	URC Groby	Age 10 to 15
Sun 7th	9.30am	All Age Worship	Groby Church	Families
Tues 9th	9.15am	Tots & Toddlers	Ratby Church	under 5s
Tues 9th	3.15pm	Kids Konnect	Ratby Church	Primary
Fri 12th	9.30am	Catch	URC Groby	under 5s
Fri 12th	7.30pm	Rock Solid	URC Groby	Age 10 to 15
Sun 14th	10.30am	Crossfire	Groby Village Hall	Secondary
Tues 16th	9.15am	Tots & Toddlers	Ratby Church	under 5s
Tues 16th	3.15pm	Kids Konnect	Ratby Church	Primary
Fri 19th	9.30am	Catch	URC Groby	under 5s
Fri 19th	7.30pm	Rock Solid	URC Groby	Age 10 to 15
Tues 18th	9.15am	Tots & Toddlers	Ratby Church	under 5s
Tues 18th	3.15pm	Kids Konnect	Ratby Church	Primary
Thurs 25th	10.00am	Family Christmas	Groby Church	Families
Thurs 25th	10.00am	Family Communion	Ratby Church	Families

Grobby Christmas Dates 2025

Saturday 6th – Tuesday 8th December

Christmas Tree Festival

St Philip and St James Church

Saturday 13th December

2-4pm

Tree of Remembrance

A time for the bereaved to have space to remember those they have lost.

St Philip and St James Church

Tuesday 16th December

7pm

Carols Round the Tree

Stamford Arms

Thursday 18th December

10.30am

Carols at Fair Cuppa

Village Hall

Sunday 21st December

9.30am

Nativity Service

St Philip and St James Church

6.00pm

9 Lessons and Carols

St Philip and St James Church

Wednesday 24th December

9.30am

Holy Communion

St Philip and St James Church

4pm

Christingle Service

St Philip and St James Church

11pm

Midnight Communion

St Philip and St James Church

St Philip & St James Church, Groby



Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 6th December 10.00am - 6.00pm

Sunday 7th December 12.00pm - 5.00pm

Monday 8th December 3.00pm - 5.00pm

Tuesday 9th December 3.00pm - 5.00pm

Entry
Free

Sale
Table

Refreshments



Polar Explorers Winter Holiday Club

For Children from
Foundation Stage to Year 6

Monday 16th & Tuesday 17th February
United Reformed Church, Groby
£5 per day (concessions available)

To book contact
youthworkergroby@gmail.com

CHURCH WOMEN'S GUILD, DECEMBER 2025

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL

At our last meeting we met at the home of ELIZABETH JARVIS where we had an excellent talk by MATHEW SMITH about his work at ST BERNARDS ABBEY, where he helps in the Brewery. Very interesting to learn about the brewing and life in the Abbey. To round it all off we had a tasting of 2 different beers and YES we all managed to get home safely !!

OUR XMAS MEETING will be held on WEDNESDAY 10th DECEMBER, 2.30 pm at the home of Marie TEBBETT, 8 SYCAMORE DRIVE, GROBY. Remember your small gift for Santa's Sack, food to share, and any small games for us to play. Hope to see you all there.

WE DO NOT MEET DURING JANUARY AND FEBRUARY.
More information from Annette Fowler (2873169)



FAIR CUPPA CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Please note the special festive Fair Cuppa event on Thursday 18th December, when there will be Christmas Carols as well as the usual refreshments. This is a very popular event and not to be missed!



FAIR CUPPA

FAIR CUPPA ROTA - DECEMBER	
4th	Sandra & Hilary
11th	Elizabeth & Janet
18th	<i>Christmas carols</i>
25th	NO FAIR CUPPA



Thursdays at
Groby Village Hall
10.30 to 12.00 noon

Please come along for a chat and a cuppa!

For further information contact Elizabeth Jarvis 0116 431 9990

What do you know about the Children's Society?

Our story began in 1881. Edward Rudolf, a young Sunday school teacher and civil servant in South London, saw the [effects of poverty on children](#) and decided to do something about it.

When two young boys failed to turn up for his Sunday school, he went to look for them and was shocked to find them begging for food on the streets. Their father had died, leaving their mother struggling to bring up seven children under the age of 11.

Rudolf soon realised this was not a unique story and there were countless young people living in poverty. At that point, he decided to dedicate his life to improving the lives of children who had it toughest. This was the beginning of The Church of England Children's Society.

The Children's Society today. This is just one of the projects run by the Children's Society

Young Carers Festival

A 2018 BBC survey suggested there could be as many as 800,000 young carers aged 11-15 in England, looking after family members or friends. Being a young carer often means young people sideline their own childhood, missing out on school and losing touch with friends.

They have so much to deal with and so much to juggle. This one weekend in a year just gives them the time and space away from their caring roles just to be themselves, first and foremost. To be young people, to make friends, to be alongside other young people that are similar to them, to have loads of fun, to do loads of activities and share their experiences to try and help other young carers across the country to get better support."

"It's full on for young carers and it's a lot for them to process," Anya says.

"Often their own mental health suffers as a result because they're putting a lot of their time and energy into the cared for person and so their needs come secondary to that."

I think it's so important for young carers to have access to the Young Carers Festival.

Every summer, we partner with YMCA Fairthorne Group to host the largest festival in the world for young people with a caring responsibility at home.

When Anya is asked to describe what visitors to our Young Carers Festival can expect, she paints a very vivid picture. "There are bright lights, tents, marquees, paints, clay, craft, face paints, dancing, braiding, reptiles. There is music, shouting, singing. It's such an inspirational and motivational place to be," she smiles, before adding, "It's basically the best weekend ever."

Each year we support the Children's Society by holding a Christingle Service at which donations are welcomed for the work of this Church of England organisation.

There will be donation envelopes in church during December.



The image is our church during the 'Service of Loving Remembrance', showing the candles lit in memory. Thanks to Dawn Walker for the photograph.



Open Church at Christmas

On the two Saturdays, 13th and 20th December, from 2pm to 4pm, the Parish Churches of Ratby and Groby will once again be open for a time of reflection. It will be an opportunity for those who have lost loved ones recently (or a while ago) to remember them at this special time of year.

During the afternoon, there will be an opportunity to place cards with prayers or loving words on a **Tree of Remembrance** (at Groby) and to light a candle in their memory.

While you are there, if you find that you would like to speak to someone about how you feel, members of the Churches' Ministry Teams will also be available, if asked, ready to lend a listening ear.

If you are around at that time, please do drop in. Tea and biscuits will be provided!

Keith Wignall,
Associate Minister, St Philip and St James Church, Groby.

Ratby Open Church at Christmas – 13th December, 2-4pm
Groby Open Church at Christmas – 20th December, 2-4pm



Riffat's Recipes

Gajar ka Halwa (Pakistani Style) ***Carrot pudding***

Ingredients: 1 kg red carrots (desi gajar) peeled and finely grated,
1 litre full-fat milk
4–5 green cardamoms slightly crushed
½ cup ghee (clarified butter)
½ to ¾ cup sugar – adjust to your taste
¼ cup khoya / mawa (optional but gives rich flavour)
2–3 tbsp condensed milk (optional, for extra richness)
½ cup mixed nuts sliced almonds, pistachios, cashews Raisins (optional)

Instructions:

Prepare the Carrots:

Wash, peel, and grate the carrots using a hand grater or food processor.

Cook the Carrots in Milk:

In a large, heavy-bottomed pan or pot, add the grated carrots and the milk.,Add the crushed green cardamoms.

Cook on medium heat until the milk starts to boil. Then lower the heat and let the carrots cook slowly in the milk. Stir occasionally to prevent burning.

Continue cooking until all the milk is absorbed. This can take around 30–45 minutes.

Add Ghee:

Once the milk is absorbed and the carrots are soft, add ½ cup ghee.

Sauté the mixture in ghee for 10–15 minutes on medium heat until it turns a deeper colour and becomes aromatic.

Add Sugar and Khoya:

Add sugar and mix. The halwa will become slightly watery again as sugar melts.

Continue cooking until the moisture evaporates and it thickens again.

Add khoya (or condensed milk if using), and cook for another 5–10 minutes.

Riffat left two pudding recipes for us to enjoy as Christmas approaches. This is the final one. Thank you Riffat!



Christmas Time

By Gillian Winder

It's Christmas time, we rejoice and we sing
And welcome again Christ-our new born king.
But what does it mean in our war torn world ?
Where people still suffer in darkness and pain,
Where children are hungry and many lives lost,
Where parents grieve daily the children they've lost.
What does it mean when the fighting goes on,
What does it mean the birth of Gods Son?
Can we believe that in this tiny child
A new day is dawning!, there's hope for the world.
For one day all suffering will come to an end,
All tears washed away, all hearts he will mend.

But before that day dawns we remember his pain,
As Christ died on the Cross, our salvation to gain,
But the wonderful truth is he rose from the dead
And lives now forever, a crown on his head.

How much does he love our poor suffering world?
His compassion for all was shown in his life
His life in our world as he taught and he healed,
He reached out to the leper, the blind and the lost.
He came to transform, to forgive and restore,
To build a new kingdom of love not of hate,,
A kingdom of peace not of conflict and war.

What does it mean that the Christ child was born?
Remember that one of the names he was given.
It's Emmanuel, the God who is with us
So the God who trod through Jerusalem's streets in the past,
Still walks with those suffering in a battled scarred world,
And, as he does, he weeps and he sighs
For his world that is still gripped in hatred and in pain.
So listen, remember his words of peace and of hope
He said 'Love one another as I have loved you.

It is definitely summer over here:

all of a sudden there's a heat wave, water restrictions and random fires on dry vegetation or the land-fill site. It is during these months of the year I realise more deeply that we are living far away: The heat making arms prickle; the sounds of crickets chirruping all night; the heady smell of Jacaranda trees (of which I used to be allergic); the bleached scrubland and the abundant lush vines under an unbelievably blue cloudless sky; the dryness of the air making skin dry, hair whiter and noses bleed; and the taste of dust and smoke (some with health-concerning 'value-added' from the dried sewage leak down the road!) and then it is Christmas!

It still feels odd.

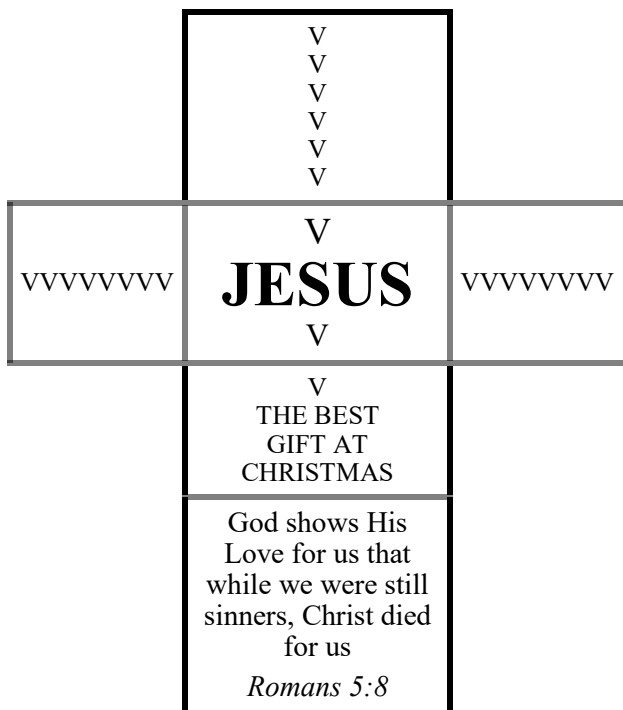
Our Church, Worcester United held a joint Christmas Celebration with the Afrikaans Mother Church on 9th November!!

Learners are writing final exams, schools close on December 5th Jean is going to Jo'burg to mark the Matric Science exams.

Hannah will visit Ruth whilst he is away.

We are planning 'a Christmas Gospel' through verses, cards and gifts during the week before Christmas; and hopefully will start an Advent theme of waiting. I can highlight and explain through the prayers before we eat breakfasts. Maybe candles. Most of Christmas is still in my head! Our Church is holding a Carols by Candlelight service on the 7th December so a candle theme could work. We hope some of the guys will join in.

We have been driving round to where folk sleep on Fridays with a breakfast and Summer clothes and flip flops. I have set aside Summer dresses for a specific 'dress up for Christmas' moment for the ladies one breakfast time



XXXX STEVE, VAL, HANNAH, RUTH & JEAN XXXX

I have the card and beads ready to begin making this box shape, to be tied up with ribbon, revealing the message inside with a necklace of a cross, heart, PEACE or LOVE.

We also have beautiful Bethlehem designed Christmas cards for everyone (January Sales; carried back to SA in luggage !)



Please note that ***Paul and Jane Cox*** no longer have a landline phone number. Paul's number, which should be called on matters in relation to the organ or choir, is 07850 960172.

CHURCH REGISTERS

WEDDINGS

Ratby
None
Groby
None



BAPTISMS

Ratby
None
Groby
2 November ~ Luna Denham



We welcome her into the church family

FUNERALS

Ratby
None
Groby
20 October ~ Joyce Knight
7 November ~ Gary Quilter



We extend our sympathy and prayers to the family and friends, and pray that they may find peace through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Taizé Prayer

with songs and silence

inspired by the international
monastic community of Taizé, France



14th December
1st February
15th March

At 6pm Trinity Methodist Church
Main St, Markfield LE67 9UU

For more information: Karen 07739 555015
karensilverwood@googlemail.com www.taize.fr/en



FLOWERS December		
	Altar	Memorial Vase
7th	Hayley	
14th		
16th		
21st	Everyone	Marjorie
28th		

Church Cleaning December

24 Nov - 7 Dec	Chris D & Julie
8 Dec - 21 Dec	Elizabeth & Christine
22 Dec - 3 Jan	Linda & John

January Magazine Deadline Saturday **13th December**

Please send all items to
stpandjmagazine@googlemail.com

Items for the
weekly news sheet
to:

office@bradgatechurches.org.uk



Do you receive the magazine on a regular basis?

If not and you would like to have a copy each month, please contact a member of the clergy or one of the church wardens.

You will find their details on the contact list overleaf.

Parish Office hours:
9.30 - 11.30, Mon to Fri

PARISH OFFICE

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	Owen Lawrence	01530 243179
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